

IN THE CLAIMS:

The text of all pending claims, (including withdrawn claims) is set forth below. Cancelled and not entered claims are indicated with claim number and status only. The claims as listed below show added text with underlining and deleted text with ~~striketrough~~. The status of each claim is indicated with one of (original), (currently amended), (cancelled), (withdrawn), (new), (previously presented), or (not entered).

Please CANCEL claim 5, AMEND claims 1-4, 13 and 14 and ADD new claim 16 in accordance with the following:

1. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An ingredient information management apparatus, comprising:

means for receiving menu information input through member terminals;

menu storage means for storing the menu information and amounts of ingredients necessary to prepare each menu indicated in the menu information;

ingredient amount searching means for searching out the ingredients and the amounts thereof, from the menu storage means, corresponding to said menu information using remaining previously used ingredients of other menus;

sale unit storage means for storing a sale unit for every ingredient, the sale unit of each ingredient being stored in association with the stored menu information including the previously used ingredients of the other menus;

sale unit searching means for searching out the sale unit, from the sale unit storage means, corresponding to said ingredient searched out by the ingredient amount searching means;

comparing means for automatically comparing the amount of said ingredient searched out by the ingredient amount searching means with remaining amounts of the previously used ingredients of the other menus corresponding to the sale unit searched by the sale unit searching means and outputting a result indicative thereof; and

menu information searching means for searching out menu information, from the menu storage means, including said ingredient when the result indicates that said amount of said ingredient is less than said sale unit.

2. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An ingredient information management method, comprising:

- receiving the menu information input through a member terminal;
- storing the menu information and amounts of ingredients necessary to prepare each menu indicated in the menu information;
- searching out the ingredients and the amounts thereof corresponding to said menu information using remaining previously used ingredients of other menus;
- storing a sale unit for every ingredient, the sale unit of each ingredient being stored in association with the stored menu information including the previously used ingredients of the other menus;
- searching out the sale unit corresponding to the ingredient searched;
- automatically comparing the amount of said ingredient searched with amounts of the previously used ingredients of the other menus corresponding to the sale unit searched and outputting a result indicative thereof; and
- searching out menu information including said ingredient when the result indicates that the amount of said ingredient is less than said sale unit.

3. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A program allowing a computer to execute:

- receiving the menu information input through a member terminal;
- storing the menu information and amounts of ingredients necessary to prepare each menu indicated in the menu;
- searching out the ingredients and the amounts thereof corresponding to said menu information using remaining previously used ingredients of other menus;
- storing a sale unit for every ingredient, the sale unit of each ingredient being stored in association with the stored menu information including the previously used ingredients of the other menus;
- searching out the sale unit corresponding to the ingredient searched;
- automatically comparing the amount of said ingredient searched with amounts of the previously used ingredients of the other menus corresponding to the sale unit searched and outputting a result indicative thereof; and
- searching out menu information including said ingredient in case that the result indicates that the amount of said ingredient is less than said sale unit.

4. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A computer readable storage medium which stores a program allowing a computer to execute:

receiving the menu information input through a member terminal;

storing the menu information and amounts of ingredients necessary to prepare each menu indicated in the menu;

searching out the ingredients and the amounts thereof corresponding to said menu information using remaining previously used ingredients of other menus;

storing a sale unit for every ingredient, the sale unit of each ingredient being stored in association with the stored menu information including the previously used ingredients of the other menus;

searching out the sale unit corresponding to the ingredient searched;

automatically comparing the amount of said ingredient searched with amounts of the previously used ingredients of the other menus corresponding to the sale unit searched and outputting a result indicative thereof; and

searching out menu information including said ingredient in case that the result indicates that the amount of said ingredient is less than said sale unit.

5. (CANCELLED)

6. (WITHDRAWN) A expected sales computing method, comprising:

storing a first successful sale coefficient representing a probability of purchasing ingredients of a first menu and a second successful sale coefficient representing a probability of purchasing ingredients of a second menu inquired in relation to the first menu, ingredients of the first menu are linked with previously used ingredients of the second menu;

computing expected sales of the ingredients of the first menu based on the ingredients of the first menu, a number of distributions of the first menu, and the successful sale coefficients of the first menu; and

computing the expected sales of the ingredients of a second menu based on the ingredients of the second menu inquired in relation to the first menu, a number of inquiries of the second menu, and the successful sale coefficients of the second menu.

7. (WITHDRAWN) A program allowing a computer to execute:

storing a first successful sale coefficient representing a probability of purchasing

ingredients of a first menu and a second successful sale coefficient representing a probability of purchasing ingredients of a second menu inquired in relation to the first menu, ingredients of the first menu are linked with previously used ingredients of the second menu;

computing expected sales of the ingredients of the first menu based on the ingredients of the first menu, a number of distributions of the first menu, and the successful sale coefficients of the first menu; and

computing the expected sales of the ingredients of a second menu based on the ingredients of the second menu inquired in relation to the first menu, a number of inquiries of the second menu, and the successful sale coefficients of the second menu.

8. (WITHDRAWN) A computer readable storage medium which stores a program allowing a computer to execute:

storing a first successful sale coefficient representing a probability of purchasing ingredients of a first menu and a second successful sale coefficient representing a probability of purchasing ingredients of a second menu inquired in relation to the first menu, ingredients of the first menu are linked with previously used ingredients of the second menu;

computing expected sales of the ingredients of the first menu based on the ingredients of the first menu, a number of distributions of the first menu, and the successful sale coefficients of the first menu; and

computing the expected sales of the ingredients of a second menu based on the ingredients of the second menu inquired in relation to the first menu, a number of inquiries of the second menu, and the successful sale coefficients of the second menu.

9. (WITHDRAWN) The ingredient information management apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising:

a means for transmitting ingredients of a first menu and a number of distributions of the first menu to a user terminal, and

a means for transmitting ingredients of a second menu inquired in relation to the first menu and a number of the inquiries of the second menu to the user terminal.

10. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The ingredient information management method according to claim 2, further comprising:

transmitting ingredients of a first menu and a number of distributions of the first menu to

a user terminal, and

transmitting ingredients of a second menu inquired in relation to the first menu and a number of the inquiries of the second menu to the user terminal.

11. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The program according to claim 3 allowing a computer to further execute:

transmitting ingredients of a first menu and a number of distributions of the first menu to a user terminal, and

transmitting ingredients of a second menu inquired in relation to the first menu and a number of the inquiries of the second menu to the user terminal.

12. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The computer readable storage medium according to claim 4 for storing a program allowing a computer to further execute:

transmitting ingredients of a first menu and a number of distributions of the first menu to a user terminal, and

transmitting ingredients of a second menu inquired in relation to the first menu and a number of the inquiries of the second menu to the user terminal.

13. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An ingredient information management method, comprising:

storing menu information and amounts of ingredients necessary to prepare each menu indicated in the menu information and storing a sale unit for each ingredient of each menu; and

outputting data of an ingredient, a sale unit and an amount of the ingredient upon a menu search, where the amount of the ingredient indicated ~~as a result of~~ by the menu search is searched for using automatically compared with remaining amounts of previously used ingredients of each menu corresponding to the indicated sale unit and an indication is provided when the ingredient indicated is less than the sale unit and the sale unit of each ingredient is associated with the menu information including the previously used ingredients of each menu.

14. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method of managing ingredient information of menu items, comprising:

associating an ingredient constituting a first menu item among the menu items with a previously used ingredient constituting a second menu item among the menu items; and

automatically searching ingredient information of each of the menu items including remaining previously used ingredient of the second menu responsive to a search request with respect to the first menu item and indicating when the ingredient constituting the first menu item is less than an amount of the previously used ingredient constituting the second menu item.

15. (CANCELLED)

16. (NEW) A method for managing ingredient information, comprising:

receiving a new menu information from a user;

searching for ingredients necessary for the new menu using remaining ingredients of a previous menu; and

providing said obtained ingredients for the new menu to the user upon determination that amounts of ingredients necessary for the new menu are less than remaining amounts of the previous menu.